

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS

ROBERT AITKEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

20th ANNIVERSARY

1990-91 SEASON

New Music Concerts **The Challenging Generation**

A special concert
celebrating the 40th anniversary
of the League of Composers and the
20th anniversary of New Music Concerts

New Music Concerts 20th Anniversary Season

Tonight's performance is being recorded for broadcast on CBC Stereo's "Arts National," hosted by Terry Campbell, at 8 pm 94.1 FM on Monday, March 4, 1991.

New Music Concerts

The Challenging Generation

Februrary 24, 1991
Premiere Dance Theatre
Toronto, Ontario

In 1974, I had my first composition lesson with Murray Adaskin. During that first lesson, surrounded by a wealth of paintings, photographs and scores, Mr. Adaskin gently played a series of intervals at the piano, all the while explaining that each interval, although unique, was of equal beauty and worth. At the time, I'm not sure I quite believed him (I was fifteen). Last week, I found myself repeating this story to a class of music appreciation students who were hearing Stockhausen's *Klavierstück X* for the first time. I'm not sure they believed me, either.

A sense of continuity in a culture can rarely be defined by tracing stylistic influences or mapping artistic family trees. Influence more often takes the form of a moral force, a passion for art, for sound, for truth. These things are more difficult to measure than the way one treats a minor second or the violin, but this does not mean that they should not be considered.

As **New Music Concerts** celebrates the fortieth anniversary of the Canadian League of Composers, it honours five of Canada's senior artists, each of whom has devoted a lifetime to music. Their careers began at a time in which foreign artists dominated Canadian artistic venues and opposition to the act of making art in Canada was considerable. Through their vision and courage, a country with comparatively little musical history and resources has become a country rich in its diversity of musical voices. These artists have not only enriched our lives with music, but with a sense that the imagination can change our world.

- Rodney Sharman
Secretary, Canadian League of Composers

MURRAY ADASKIN (b. Toronto, 1906) comes from a family of distinguished musicians whose contribution to Canadian culture cannot be underestimated. He has been active as composer, violinist and teacher in Toronto, Saskatoon and Victoria, where he has lived since 1973. As head of the University of Saskatchewan's music department and music director of the Saskatoon Symphony he was responsible for many commissions and premieres of Canadian and international repertoire. The first performance of his *Concerto for Orchestra* was received with a standing ovation by the Victoria Symphony audience earlier this season.

VIOLET ARCHER (b. Montréal, 1913) is one of Canada's most prolific composers, having written over two hundred eighty compositions. She has had a distinguished academic career, having taught at McGill, North Texas State College, Cornell, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Alberta, Edmonton. Like her former teachers Bela Bartok and Paul Hindemith, she is passionately committed to writing music for young performers. Her most recent compositions include several graded pieces for solo percussion commissioned by the Kiwanis Festival and *Music Now*, a collection of pieces expressly written for young pianists. In 1987, the library of the Prairie Regional Office of the Canadian Music Centre was named in her honour.

JEAN PAPINEAU-COUTURE (b. Montréal, 1916) has played an important role in shaping the Canadian music world as composer, teacher and administrator. His phenomenal record of public service includes terms as president of the Canadian Music Centre, Jeunesses Musicales Canada, the SMCQ and the Canadian League of Composers, among others. His *Concerto for Contrabasson and Contrabass* was a highlight of the Montréal Symphony Orchestra's 1988-89 season. He is currently writing a work for violin and piano for Winnipeg violinist Victor Schultz.

The music of **BARBARA PENTLAND** (b. Winnipeg, 1912) reflects her artistic concern with "purity of line, economy of expression and directness of purpose." Her decision to devote her life to music was met with considerable opposition from both her parents and the musical establishment. In 1949 she was invited by Harry Adaskin (brother of Murray Adaskin) to teach at the music department of the University of British Columbia, where she taught until 1963. Her music has been closely associated with the Purcell String Quartet, who have performed her five string quartets and her *Quintet for Piano and Strings*. She has recently completed a new work for solo piano, *Small Pieces for a Shrinking Planet*.

It is difficult to imagine contemporary music in Canada without **JOHN WEINZWEIG** (b. Toronto, 1913). In addition to his historical role as the first twelve-tone composer in Canada, John Weinzweig has been an outspoken advocate of Canadian music, and was central in the creation of the Canadian League of Composers. He continues to work on behalf of Canadian artists and for high standards in broadcasting and performance. A list of his former students reads like a Who's Who of Canadian music, and his artistic output has become the standard repertoire of performers throughout Canada. *Sounds & Reflections*, a collection of essays by John Weinzweig was recently published by Poole Hall Press.

How to be a Local Hero

Think. When you think about all the good causes that need your help, it can be a little discouraging. But think what a real difference you can make to just a few of them. You can make giving a regular part of your budget and plan your donations so they do the most good. You can use your special abilities to help a group in your community. Think about it. Be a Local Hero.



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A new spirit of giving





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THE COMPOSERS SPEAK

Music is by essence an art of non-verbal or wordless communication, and I live in, for and by music. Therefore, when I try to communicate with words what is my credo as a composer, I remain speechless!... But having been a teacher, I can also speak.

*“I live in, for
and by music”*

Jean Papineau-Couture

When I compose I intend to elaborate a sound product which will be artistically seductive. At the same time, it must be attuned to the possibilities of the instrument(s) I use in each intended piece. I very often ask extreme virtuosity from the performer(s) (this is often my stumbling-block!) and remain

optimistic about their cleverness to find their own technical solution.

From myself, I require the utmost inventiveness to lead to something sufficiently different from what I have done before; the piece must have its own profile, its specific identity. To reach that goal I do not hesitate to use old device(s) in a new perspective.

And I beg the listener to open himself to the unique sound universe of the work and thus to refrain from comparing each single piece with another piece either from myself or from any other composer. Of course I endeavor to do the same when listening to music in general and to the music of my colleagues.

- Jean Papineau-Couture

*“One's credo is
in the music”*

Barbara Pentland

One's credo is in the music; I have nothing else to say. I write music, not words. Words are not my métier.

- Barbara Pentland

It is difficult enough to write music but trying to explain it is even more challenging.

Music, it seems to me, should reflect the personal voice of its composer. Having said that, I cannot say precisely how that is done. Perhaps when a composer has learned his craft and knows the work of composers past

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on their
40th anniversary
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ONTARIO REGIONAL OFFICE

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- Meet-the-Composer events
- Promotional activities

and present he is then free to be his own person, to say or write what is true for himself.

My great wish and dream is that the music I write might be recognizably mine. Canada is the home of my birth and of my life's work. My music comes from my Canadian experience. It is no for me to say, but I would

“My wish is that the music I write be recognizably mine”

Murray Adaskin

dearly love should the following quote from Leonard Issacs be true, when he stated in a CBC commentary on my Algonquin Symphony: “...the texture is rather spare - the lines of the music are clear and clean, and the interstices are devoid of lush and undergrowth. There is a

feeling of great space and distance - not lacking in some asperity. Just as Aaron Copeland's music is very American, so is Murray Adaskin's Symphony in some true and intangible way, very Canadian.”

- Murray Adaskin

As a composer, I need, first, to respond to my own pulse, not the public pulse. Yet, in the course of composing, consciously or subconsciously, I engage in a fine balancing act between what the players can do and the complex psychology of the listener. Chance is not a new discovery; we composers have been subject to its hazards since the invention of music notation.

“I need to respond to my own pulse, not the public pulse”

John Weinzwieg

-John Weinzwieg

“Challenging the instruments without making impossible demands”

Violet Archer

The composer's goal is to create music which will be meaningful to the listener and aims at clarity; challenging the instruments or voices without making impossible demands for the performer and hopefully, as well, for the listener.

-Violet Archer

THE CREATION OF THE CANADIAN LEAGUE OF COMPOSERS

A Recollection by John Weinzwieg

It was just another Sunday in Toronto - February 3rd, 1951. Two of my former composition students, Harry Somers and Sam Dolin and me, had just returned from a trip to Hamilton to visit their former piano teacher, Reginald Godden. He was not at home. So we drove back to my house at 101 Belgravia where my wife offered supper. Soon after, we talked about the problems of composing in Canada. They, too, were experiencing the sense of isolation in a career that held out little hope of publication and recording, the high cost of reproducing extended works and the unlikely prospect of their performance. Our shared feelings of frustration lead us to the conclusion that collective action by composers themselves was the only way to improve conditions for composers. And so we debated the means far into the night. Should we form a small group of composers united by a shared esthetic — the Russian “Five”, the French “Les Six” — or would our concerns be better served by a League of Composers on the American model? With proddings from Helen, my wife, to “make up our minds”, we decided to organize a Canadian League of Composers.

During the following months, and many meetings, we enlarged the group, set up an executive committee consisting of myself as President, Louis Applebaum as Vice-President, Harry Freedman as Secretary and Andy Twa as Treasurer. We defined our aims in a constitution and proceeded towards the formal registration of our name. By March of the following year (1952), we had been granted a Dominion charter listing eight



(L to R standing) Louis Applebaum, Samuel Dolin, Harry Somers, Leslie Mann, Barbara Pentland, Andrew Twa, Harry Freedman, Udo Kasemets; (sitting) Jean Papineau-Couture, John Weinzwieg, John Beckwith.

founding members: Harry Somers, Samuel Dolin, Louis Applebaum, Murray Adaskin, Harry Freedman, Andy Twa, Phil Nimmons and myself. Invitations to composers in the major cities brought our membership to twenty.

Our formative year, 1951, coincided with the Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (the Massey Commission) which recommended the establishment of a Canada Council. We now felt ready to embark on a major concert undertaking. On March 26th, 1952, under the patronage of the Governor-General of Canada and the members of the Massey Commission, with meagre assets of \$15.00, we hired the Toronto Symphony for our first orchestra concert, to take place in Massey Hall, and engaged Geoffrey Waddington as conductor. Composers and their families sold tickets, solicited funds from friends and their friends. The program challenged the established order. We opened with a symphony, began the second half with a violin concerto and concluded with a short piece. We demonstrated to a responsive audience that a major Canadian work could be number one on the program.

FEBRUARY 24, 1991 8 PM
PREMIERE DANCE THEATRE

PROGRAM

JOHN WEINZWEIG

Pieces of Five
(1976)

The Contemporary Brass

James Gardiner, trumpet
Michael White, trumpet
Jenny Wilson, horn
Al Kay, trombone
Scott Irvine, tuba

VIOLET ARCHER

Moods
(1986)

Steve Pierre, clarinet
Peter Lutek, saxophone

JEAN PAPINEAU-COUTURE *Les Arabesques d'Isabelle*
(1989)

Robert Aitken, flute
Nancy Bourdon-Nelson, oboe
Steve Pierre, clarinet
Kathleen McLean, bassoon
Marc Widner, piano

Piano: Steinway & Sons from Remenyi House of Music.

INTERMISSION

BARABARA PENTLAND

Tellus
(1982)

Robert Aitken, flute
Marc Widner, piano
Andrew Burashko, celeste
David Hetherington, cello
Robin Engelman, percussion

MURRAY ADASKIN

Bassoon Quintet
(1977)

Kathleen McLean, bassoon
Lance Elbeck, violin
Sonia Visante, violin
Douglas Perry, viola
David Hetherington, cello

ADASKIN, ARCHER, PAPINEAU-COUTURE, WEINZWEIG

*Celebration**
(1991)

Dianne Aitken, flute
Nancy Bourdon-Nelson, oboe
Steve Pierre, clarinet
Peter Lutek, saxophone
Kathleen McLean, bassoon
Al Kay, trombone
Marc Widner, piano
Andrew Burashko, celeste
Lance Elbeck, violin
Sonia Visante, violin
Douglas Perry, viola
David Hetherington, cello
Robin Engelman, percussion
James Gardiner, trumpet
Michael White, trumpet
Jenny Wilson, horn
Scott Irvine, tuba
Robert Aitken, conductor

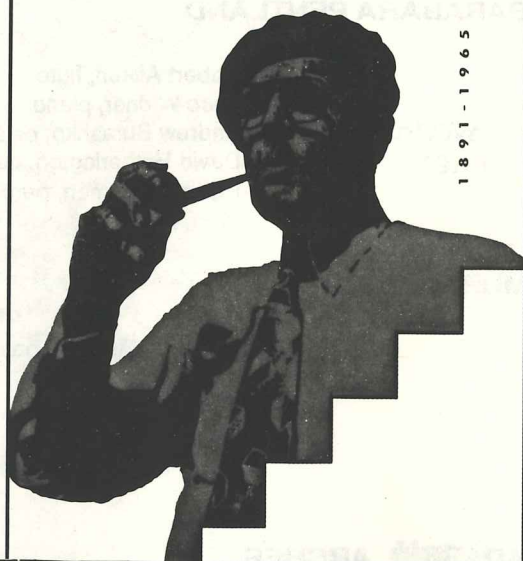
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The National and Ontario Offices of the Canadian Music Centre invite you to a reception in the upstairs lobby after the performance.

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**Composer
Teacher
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To celebrate the centenary of Claude Champagne's birth, this exhibition focuses on the man who was central to the growth and development of French-Canadian music. His career as a composer, teacher and promoter of Canadian music is illustrated through the use of documents, photographs, memorabilia and, of course, his music.

A free exhibition catalogue is available from:
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A bilingual exhibition of facsimiles will be ready to start travelling in March 1991. For further information, contact: Andrea Paradis, Public Programs and Cultural Events, Telephone: (613) 992-3052, FAX (613) 996-7941.



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of Canada

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To augment our small ticket-selling force, we decided to approach the Womens' Committee of the Toronto Symphony. Murray Adaskin and I undertook the mission. Our proposal for cooperation was met with cool indifference. Despite this rebuff, our concert was well attended and warmly received by both audience and press. With the income from broadcast rights, we managed to cover the entire cost of the venture. Conductor Geoffrey Waddington's excellent leadership was closely watched by CBC officials and resulted in his appointment as music director of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and subsequently, the creation of the CBC Symphony which was to play a vital role in the creation and performance of extended works by Canadian composers.

After the success of the Massey Hall concert, we expanded our concerts to Montréal, where a strong concert committee was organized by Jean and Isabelle Papineau-Couture; followed by Hamilton, Winnipeg and Vancouver. By 1957, we had presented 100 Canadian works (including 2 operas) of which only 12 were published; 4 of them in a piano album published by the League. Still, not a single piece recorded commercially! In 1957, the Canada Council was created, and two years later, with a detailed plan from the League endorsed by the Canadian Music Council, the Canadian Music Centre was established in Toronto. At last, composers in Canada had gained a secure foothold in their own country!

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS

New Music Concerts was founded 1971 by Toronto composers Robert Aitken and Norma Beecroft to fill a void in Toronto's cultural life by offering through its annual series a stimulating cross section of international contemporary musical activity. Its inaugural concert, which took place on January 6th, 1972, presented the music of Luciano Berio in the presence of the composer, and successfully began the long odyssey through the world of new music. The 1990-91 season celebrates the 20th anniversary of NMC, and tonight's concerts appropriately honours Canada's most vital and senior composers—Murray Adaskin, Violet Archer, Jean Papineau-Couture, Barbara Pentland, and John Weinzwieg—who courageously led younger generations through the highs and lows of composition.

In the 1970's, a period where contemporary chamber music from the Canadian and international repertoire was rarely heard in Canada and elsewhere, and Canadian musicians and soloists were relatively unknown abroad, NMC toured extensively in Canada and the United States, and undertook a successful five week tour of Iceland, Norway,

Sweden, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and England. Through such tours and radio broadcasts of its regular season concerts by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, NMC has achieved an international reputation for the high quality of its performances and for its unique programming.

Happy Birthday, New Music Concerts!

Norma Beecroft
Co-founder and Past President

Robert Aitken
Co-founder and Artistic Director

TONIGHT'S WORKS

PIECES OF FIVE (1976) by JOHN WEINZWEIG

In his youth, John Weinzwieg's music studies were in competition with his sport activities. They were intertwined: piano—hockey—mandolin—tennis—tuba—soccer—saxophone—harmony—basketball—double bass. However, his Olympic connections were made through music. His *Divertimento no. 1* for flute and strings won the highest award (silver medal) in the 1984 London Olympiad. *Pieces of Five* for brass quintet was commissioned by the Canadian Brass for performance during the Cultural Celebrations of the 1976 Montréal Olympiad, and after a Canadian tour, it travelled abroad to London and Paris.

The brass quintet is cast in a series of short-long, fast-slow, soft-loud actions that explore brass timbres and rhythmic interactions in a framework of dialogues. Although the large number of events may appear fragmentary and without organic fusion, they have a stylistic bond. Altogether, they constitute a kind of assemblage; a fitting together of different thematic shapes in a succession of contrasting relationships.

MOODS (1986) by VIOLET ARCHER

Moods for clarinet and alto saxophone was commissioned by saxophonist Jeremy Brown in 1986 for himself and his wife Mary, clarinetists both on the teaching staff of Grande Prairie Regional College in Grande Prairie, Alberta. The college funded the commission. The composer has sought to explore the capabilities, tone colour, expressiveness and sonorities of the two instruments both singly and together. *Moods* contains 4 movements: Theme and variations, Introspective, Whimsical and Rhapsodic.

LES ARABESQUES D'ISABELLE (1989) by JEAN PAPINEAU-COUTURE

Les Arabesques d'Isabelle reflects Jean Papineau-Couture's fascination with the sound colours produced by the low register of the clarinet and the English horn. The piano is exploited with effects throughout its register. The piece was commissioned by Winnipeg's Music Inter Alia series who gave its first performance last year.

The piece is named for his wife, who was at one time an amateur ballet dancer, hence "les arabesques." In this work he uses a fragment of an earlier piano piece, *Bagatelle, no. 1* (1943), which was dedicated to her at the time of their engagement.

TELLUS (1982) by BARBARA PENTLAND

Tellus was written in late 1981 to early 1982 on a commission from the Canada Council for the ensemble Days, Months and Years to Come. After its completion, I realized that I had been thinking frequently of the mysteries of our planet and concerned about it, hence the title. (The latter can have another meaning too—the instruments may have something to tell us.)

With all its beauty and its own potential for violence, the Earth is being mutilated in many ways by Man, who seems to believe it to be created for his exclusive use. At one point in the work, sounds evoke the memory of a fascinating roll of surf on a Mexican beach where the pebbles recede with each outward pull, while the sea-birds screech overhead.

In form, *Tellus* divides into two main parts, with a momentary break only if the players choose. Each part contains two contrasting sections and there are four aleatory zones with certain freedoms. The final zone reaches a climax which subsides into a recall of the opening mood to bring the work to a quiet close.

BASSOON QUINTET (1982) by MURRAY ADASKIN

The Bassoon Quintet was commissioned in 1977 by the CBC for performance by George Zukerman, bassoonist and the Purcell String Quartet. It was played on CBC and, later, that broadcast was included in the CBC Anthology album of recordings of Murray Adaskin's music.

The composer's interest in the bassoon stems from the time he wrote the Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra (1960). He speaks of this Quintet as a personal favourite of his works and was dedicated to his wife, Frances James.

1990-1991
New Music Concerts
celebrates its
20th Anniversary Season
with the release of its special
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featuring:

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Norma Beecroft

Gilles Tremblay
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The quintet is written in three movements:

I. Andante amabile e molto moderato; II. Adagio; III. Allegretto giocoso.

**CELEBRATION: A SPECIAL COOPERATIVE WORK by MURRAY ADASKIN,
VIOLET ARCHER, JEAN PAPINEAU-COUTURE & JOHN WEINZWEIG.**

On this special occasion, to bring this festive evening to a close, New Music Concerts asked each of our visiting composers if they would compose a short work of approximately three minutes' duration using any or all of the instruments involved. John Weinzwieg suggested the notes to begin and end each segment of the work: F, E, E-flat, and D-flat. This was the only condition. The titles of the selections are: *Solo Bassoon and String Quartet* by Murray Adaskin, *One Fifth on Four* by Violet Archer; *51 LCC Célébration 71 NMC: Collectif à Cinq* by Jean Papineau-Couture, and *Celebration* by John Weinzwieg. We are all anxious to hear the outcome of this cooperative work; can you guess the sequence of composers?



**CANADIAN LEAGUE
OF COMPOSERS**

**LIGUE CANADIENNE
DE COMPOSITEURS**

New Music Concerts

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Thanks to André Leduc, & Mark Hand.

Design of tonight's printed program donated by the Canadian Music Centre.

Tonight's guests are staying at
THE PARK PLAZA HOTEL

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A sponsor of this evening's concert.

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